Section I: Community Leadership and Support

Are community leaders aware of the importance of information technology and do they work together to address IT development issues?

Community leadership and support is the cornerstone to all local development efforts. Forming an effective technology committee requires strong representation from all sectors of the community.   Many communities struggle to get local government officials and local business people involved.

It may be helpful to meet with key individuals to personally invite them to participate in the technology committee and to gain a better understanding of how their organization is currently using information technology,

Here are some questions you may want to ask:

- How is your organization using technology?

- What is your organization spending on telecommunications and information technology annually?   What percentage of those expenditures are leaving the community? Is there a way that these expenditures could be kept in the community?

- What are your organization's current technology needs?

- What are the future technology of your organization?

- What can the community do to help your organization meet its technology needs?

As a group, discuss the membership of your technology committee. Does your technology committee have strong representation from all sectors?   Are there additional community leaders and representatives who should be invited to participate?

Sector	Current Members	Prospective Members
Business (including representatives of the 10-20 largest employers/users of technology). If agriculture is important to the local economy, agricultural producers and agribusinesses should also be represented.		
Local government (including administrators and/or elected officials, law enforcement, users of Geographic Information Systems)		
Economic and community development leaders		
Educational leaders (including K-12 and postsecondary institutions serving the area)		
Library director		
Health care providers		
Non-profits, arts, history and cultural organizations		
Senior citizens, youth, and/or other significant demographic groups		
Telecommunications providers		

A. This section should be completed by the information technology committee as a group.

Community leadership and support factors to assess:	yes	no	future action*
Has a strategic information technology plan been developed?	☐	☐	
Have there been community meetings to build community input and support for the strategic plan?	☐	☐	
Is there widespread support for information technology-related development?	☐	☐	
Is there a local champion of information technology development?	☐	☐	
Are public/private partnerships used to accelerate information technology development?	☐	☐	
Have cooperative arrangements been made for entities to aggregate demand and share costs related to information technology?	☐	☐	
Have local sources of funding for IT-related projects been identified?	☐	☐	
Does the community have a group of people assigned to seek out and follow up on alternative funding strategies for IT development?	☐	☐	
Have grant opportunities from federal, state, and private sources been researched?	☐	☐	

* This checklist has been designed as both an assessment tool, helping the community learn what is already in place, and as a list of possible activities a community may want to consider undertaking.   Use this column to make notations indicating interest in undertaking an activity or indicating that this is an area in which more information is needed.

B. This section should be initially completed by an individual or group of individuals designated by the information technology committee to be the section leader(s).

On a scale of 1 to 4, evaluate how well community leaders are addressing IT development:

1	Many business and community leaders do not understand the importance of information technology. There is little community support for IT-related development.

2	Some business and community leaders understand the importance of information technology, but information technology development is not being addressed by the community or region. There is some community support for IT-related development.

3	Many business and community leaders understand the importance of information technology and there are efforts to cooperatively address information technology development. There is moderate community support for IT-related development.

4	All key community and business leaders understand the importance of information technology and are working cooperatively to address information technology development. There is widespread community support for IT-related development.

What are our strengths in the area of community leadership?

What resources and assets are available in the community to address community leadership?   What resources and assets are available regionally or in the state?

Nebraska resources include Technologies Across Nebraska (technologiesacrossnebraska .unl.edu), the University of Nebraska Extension— particularly the Connecting Nebraska Team (connecting.unl.edu), the Nebraska Information Technology Commission (www.nitc.state.ne.us).   The Community IT Toolkit (www.nitc.state.ne.us/toolkit) has a number of resources.

What are some ways in which community leadership could be strengthened?

Does a more thorough assessment of this area need to be made?   Yes   No

C. These questions should be discussed and answered by the entire information technology committee or have community members provide input on these questions at a community forum.

In two to five years, how would you like your community to score in this area?

1   Many business and community leaders do not understand the importance of information technology. There is little community support for IT-related development.

2   Some business and community leaders understand the importance of information technology, but information technology development is not being addressed by the community or region.   There is some community support for IT-related development.

3   Many business and community leaders understand the importance of information technology and there are efforts to cooperatively address information technology development. There is moderate community support for IT-related development.

4   All key community and business leaders understand the importance of information technology and are working cooperatively to address information technology development. There is widespread community support for IT-related development.

How would you prioritize community leadership development?

1   Low priority
2   Medium priority
3   High priority
4   Highest priority